1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

completely exhausted or reduced to a mere trickle. The average annual rainfall over the last ten years is 29·75 in. The shore waters of Lake Pamolombe are well stocked with fish. Both districts are well wooded, with a large variety of timber trees. In the dry sandy soil where the population is unable to live for lack of water, the prevalent type is *tsanya*. A line of foothills from Zomba to Chikala are conserved as Forest Reserves.[1]

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY[2]

The Yao are chiefly agriculturists, and in the old days were also hunters. As they live largely in tsetse-infested areas, they do not keep cattle, except for a few herds near Fort Johnston and Zomba, in Nyasaland, and on the east of Lake Nyasa,[3] in the mountains of the Ruvuma valley around Mataka's.[4]

Abdullah describes a time when the Yao were economically self-sufficient, making their own bark-cloth, weaving, burning herbs for salt, and working iron for the tools they needed. Nevertheless, the tradition of coastward journeys for trading with the Arabs was well developed before the Europeans came to the country. They used to trade cattle and salt from the Manganja and Lomwe for tobacco and hoes, and in exchange for slaves they got from the Arabs gunpowder, guns, swords, beads, coloured cloths, earthenware, and foodstuffs.[5] Slaving expeditions were among the most important activities of the chiefs.[6] The old tradition of the absence of the men from the village owing to these expeditions, is continued in modern times by soldiers and labour migrants to Southern Rhodesia and the Union. These men send back remittances to the area, but the main population is supported by agriculture. Cash is needed for purchasing salt and cloth, for paying certain dues and fines formerly paid in kind—adultery compensation, diviner's and initiation fees—as well as for tax and rent. Consequently, while certain crops, such as tobacco and ground-nuts, are grown for cash, any food crop is liable to be sold in one form or another in local markets or by the roadside.

The food crops are maize, sorghum, finger millet, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, legumes. Fish is an important article of diet. Eggs are believed to cause sterility and are only eaten by those outside the child-propagating age; milk is disliked and never consumed.[7] *Termite alates* (flying ants) are a much relished food when they come out on nuptial flights. Rice is considered a superior food, and is eaten when possible on ritual occasions.[8]

Tobacco is the main cash crop, with individual production under the supervision of the Agricultural Department. The average cash earned per grower in 1943–4 was £5. 3*s*. This is overwhelmingly an external trade. Ground-nuts, which are sold at government-controlled markets to licensed buyers, bring in only a few shillings a year to the average seller. Women obtain cash by selling beer. At the lake shore the fishing industry is very important. Natives owning big nets are said to make between £20

[1] Murray, 1932, pp. 147–61.

[2] Unless otherwise stated, the information is from J. C. Mitchell, and relates to the Yao of south Nyasaland.

[3] Young, E., 1877, p. 102.

[4] Livingstone, 1874, pp. 72 and 80.

[5] Abdullah, 1919, pp. 10–11, 26–30.

[6] See Livingstone, 1874, p. 68; Young, E., 1877, p. 130; Thompson, 1882, p. 78; Sclater, 1893, p. 422; Maugham, R., 1909, pp. 86–7; Lewis, 1934, pp. 35–7.

[7] Bunnun, c. 1922, p. 34.

[8] Barker, 1934, p. 14.

3: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

against all evils — witchcraft, attack by lions, etc. The *akuwusi* then set about building shelters in which the *wali* will remain during their term of instruction. According to the number of the *wali* so the number of places where shelters are built may vary from one, two or three, to as many as eight. Each of these places is called *Ndapala*. They may be many miles apart and are so placed for the convenience of the mothers in various groups of villages who bring the food daily to the group of boys from those villages.

The boys when they originally left the village were wearing a large bark-cloth covering, with beads and calico, which latter articles have been taken by the *n'michilo* and his assistants. At *Ndapala* they wear simply a loin-cloth of bark.

During their stay at *Ndapala*, the *wali* are given animal names by the *akuwusi* who carry on the instruction of the boys until their return to *Lupanda*, the *n'michilo* having gone back to his village immediately after the circumcision. The names given to the boys are commonly names of beasts of prey such as Alikale (*likale* = the jackal), Achinuwi (*chinuwi* = the leopard), etc.

Certain restrictions as to diet are laid upon the *wali* by the *n'michilo*, e.g. no meat of an animal killed by a beast of prey, no mudfish, *likumbale*. He will not allow any villager to visit *Ndapala* after seven P.M. and visitors may only be men who have been through the ceremony. An uncircumcised man is called *mbalale*, one who has not been to his *Unyago*.

Other restrictions as to foodstuffs may be made by the *akuwusi*, generally in connection with the mythical origin of such food substances. A finger-shaped yam called *lipeta* is taboo, as it is said to have first sprung from the grave of a leper, the inference being obvious. After the *Unyago*, the boys have to undergo a special doctoring before they may partake of them. Bananas and rice are similarly refused them, the latter on account of a story to the effect that rice grew from the nostrils of a dead man, the idea doubtless having relation to the resemblance of rice grains to maggots. Fish is denied them by some masters of ceremonies, as it is said to have originated from the diaper of a woman which she threw away while bathing.

Each *n'michilo* may have special observances of his own. One near Zomba caused all cassava to be roasted in a certain way. Rows of pieces of cassava were placed in split bamboo spits and so roasted before the fire in the manner of fish. If roasted in the ordinary way, the cassava would split and show the white floury material inside, signified by the verb *ku-lapala*. If this is eaten by the *wali*, it is said that the preputial wound would reopen.

The length of time spent at *Ndapala* varies from four weeks to as long as three or four months. In the first place they must wait till the circumcision wounds of all are completely healed. Delay may be occasioned by complications having arisen in some cases. Again, permission to return may be withheld by the chief for some reason or other. Should one of the *wali* die at *Ndapala*, the body is buried out in the bush and nothing is said to the parents until after the ceremonies are over and all have returned to the village.

3:Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

19. That portion of the gut of animals having folds of mucus membrane inside, may be eaten only by old people past the child-propagating age. If a young woman should eat it, she would have difficulty in labor.

20. It is believed that people who eat too freely of a little fish like whitebait called *matemba* get obstruction of the bowel by the wedging together of the bones. The treatment adopted is to pass up the rectum a smooth stick with a pad of rag at the end. This cannot be done by the person himself and so the aid of another has to be called in; only an intimacy, such as the relationship of brother-in-law gives, will warrant this service being asked.

21. The Yao believe that there is a little insect which lives in the ear, called *chinyeno kipilumile*, which tells the person what is said to him, the wax in the ear being its environment. The pupil is called *mwanache jwa liso*, the child of the eye.

22. Among women, the uterus is called *nenwe* (*nene* = eyes); it is supposed to be a little person who holds the foetus. When the child is born, *nenwe* cannot find it and starts looking about, the movements causing the afterpains.

23. A man making his first journey to the coast used to sprinkle himself with water from every stream he crossed to give him a safe journey. In the same way, women at the present day going between Zomba and Blantyre sprinkle their babies with water from each stream.

24. An ant-like insect called *nduputumbe* (*lumbutumbe*, Chin.) [*Anoplolepis custodiens*] is lucky. On seeing it a native puts its belly and then rubs his own, wishing for plenty of food that day. If he is embarking on a journey or beginning some enterprise, he will wrap one of these insects in a fold of his loin cloth and take it with him for luck.

25. When a native hears the *mwipe* bird call (its call is like the *mew* of a cat), if he wants something, he immediately says, "Oh *mwipe*, I want so-and-so. Be quiet and I will then be quiet, too!" If the bird ceases calling, he knows the wish will be granted. The female bird is said to be the more certain prophet.

26. The snake, *nabulukuti*, which lives in trees and is of a buff clay color with green markings, is said by natives to pierce the chest and tie a knot in itself on each side so that it can only be withdrawn by cutting off one knot. When the snake is thus withdrawn, its blood mixes with that of the man and he will die.

27. Natives have a habit of marking the spot where any event takes place by a stone by the side of the path, and every passer-by will add a stone for luck. In this way some large piles of stones have been made.

28. A man resting on his way home from a long journey places a stone in the fork between the branches of a nearby tree, so that on his arrival he may find his wife has put by some food for him and has not used up the day's stock of flour.

29. A chameleon found digging in the path is said to presage the death of the finder's nearest relative.

276 made by boiling down the solution obtained by straining a decoction of water and the ashes of banana leaves; it contains, of course, some of the inorganic salts from the banana leaves. Without this addition, snuff is said to lack its proper aroma. The Angassi do not warm their snuff, but add a cupful made in a similar way from cow dung.

262 146 Food stuffs. According to the general supposition, the native lives on a very nutritious diet, with a great excess of carbohydrates to the exclusion of proteids and fats. While it is certainly true that he does not consider that he has been fed without his "chauk" of flour (maize, millet, rice or cassava), still he feels that his meal is a poor one if it does not also include some secondary dish, such as beans, fish, or green vegetables cooked like spinach.

243 262 The grains chiefly grown and used by the Yao are maize, millet, and a certain amount of rice.

Millets (sorghum): *Mapemba*, a tall variety, eight feet high, which is harvested late; *Mapemba ga nnonji*, a hairy variety; *Liamdalala*, a short kind, five feet high, which matures early; *Mlalao*, characterized by the fact that the ripe grains will fall when the plant is shaken, and by a rather bitter taste; *Nandenji*, a variety six feet high which ripens quickly; *Kapile*, a shorter variety with a bitter taste but, according to the natives, a pleasant smell. (It makes good beer.)

Eleusine: *Liwanje*, about four feet high with very small grains; *Chindumba*, used for making a very strong beer; *Mwendi*, a variety eight feet high. Cyperus grasses: *Usanje*; 273 there are two varieties, *Kanyindato*, which curls up and is used for making strong beer, and another kind which is not curly.

Maizes: A number of varieties of the species *Zea mays* are grown by the Yao: *Chiwere*, a black-grained variety; *Nampalala*, red maize; *Liwanje*, the seeds of which are large, white, and dented; *Nambinga*, with grains flattened on the free surface; *Kanjalanjala*, a dwarf maize about four feet high.

Rice (*Oryza sativa*): *Mpunga* (generic name *Likati*), a large-grained variety; *Singano*, with very long grains; *Linguvindimba*, red rice; *Mbangala*, characterized by the strong, not unpleasant odor it gives out when being cooked.

244 262 Cassava: *Chinangwa* is grown everywhere, but the Yao do not prepare flour from it, preferring to eat it raw at odd times. There are several varieties; *Chinangwa cha chiwere*, white cassava; *Chinangwa cha mbawazi*, a brown variety; *Liampa*, a bitter species (*Manihot utilissima*) which produces a very large root; *Chilasi* and *Kawenga*, varieties of *Manihot aipi*, the former characterized by its long, tapering leaves, while the latter is a dwarf variety with a big root.

Beans: there are a number of species of beans grown: *Mbaruwande* (*Cajanus indicus*), *nguvala* (*Vigna sativa*), *mbawazi* (*Phaseolus mungo*), *mbawanda*, (*Phaseolus sp.*), *nkondakanda*, (*Phaseolus sp.*), *nguvalamahi*, and a ground bean *njama* (*Voandzeia subterranea*).

Peas, *nsuwa* (*Pisum sativum*), are grown in abundance. There are two other varieties: *nsiwa* (*groundnuts*), and *chimbuyira*. 244 262

Sweet potatoes: *mbatata* (*Ipomœa batata*), of which the natives are very fond; they distinguish a red and a white variety, *mbatata nyanjajwe* and *mbatata nyasimwe*.

The tuber-like root of a bush called *nguombo* is also eaten, likewise the young underground shoots of a palm tree. The leaves of the sweet potato and the leaves of many wild growing plants are collected by the women and cooked like spinach; the flowers of pumpkins are used in a similar way. *Of fruits eaten*, the banana, *lipombo*, takes first place. A very large number of species of *Ficus* are grown, including *mutsondwa*, *mbinga*, *mkuli*, *mumi'mnyanya*, *kabuta* a dwarf banana, *kalowa* a wild banana, and *mlonga*, the plantain. The paw-paw is found all over the district. There are several varieties of pumpkin, *lipanga*, including *mbenda*, *chimbwidzi*, and a very large species called *mtwa wa nguwa*, "the crocodile's head." Varieties of cucumbers include *lingoda* and *kalitungulu*. 262 222

A large number of wild fruits are eaten, among them figs, *kalanje* (*Ficus*), *kimbu* (*Uapaca*), *chimili* and *lisungu*, the fruits of two species of *Landolphia*, *matungu* or *Kaffir oranges* (a species of *Strychnos*), *chilwanda*, the fruits of *Hyphœne* (palms), *matwambwa* (*Myrianthus*) a wild tree belonging to the mulberry family, and others, *ndimu*, *matungumbwidzu*, *ndwidzumbu*, *chingolwangolo*, *chimbupilipu*, *mulombo*, *likwendu*, etc. The seeds from the heads of bulrushes (*Typha*) are mashed up and eaten.

All fish are eaten except the *nguwa*, which always causes urticaria.

The flesh of all the antelopes, of cows, sheep and goats is eaten greedily; only bushbuck is avoided by some people as it is said to cause a skin eruption. Elephant is shunned by many on account of its rough skin, also rhinoceros because of the ulcers which it often has on its body, and hippopotamus on account of the marks on its back which are thought to be skin to leprosy. People eating the flesh of these animals are supposed often to sicken with leprosy, the pachydermatous skin, the ulceration or anæsthetic depigmented patches of that disease being reproduced, as the case may be. Few will eat pig or warthog on account of the digging habits of these animals. It is thought they may sometimes grub up bodies from graves. These flesh taboos may be due to Mohammedan influence. The lion, hyæna, and fox no one would touch, as they are supposed to be connected with *uwusi*;[1] but the heart of the lion might be eaten to acquire courage. Few will touch leopard flesh, but Kamanga's descendants do so. All will eat of the flesh of the serval cat but very few of the common wild cat. The rock rabbit, *nguwawiwo* (*mbira*, Chin.), is refused by most. Yao as it is a "beast without shame," having no tail to hide what should in decency be hid. Very few will partake of the baboon, but monkey is acceptable to many. A few reject porcupine, supposing they will break out in spots, while the zebra may cause stripes, and none will touch the skunk. No one eats *nyoka*, a mouse that is believed to die if it crosses a path. All kinds of rats are eaten, but the shrew-rat and mouse only by boys. Snakes

[1] This supra, p. 344.

3: Shannon D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

no one will touch. With the exception of carrion birds such as the crow and the hawk, most birds are considered fit to eat. The hornbill is not eaten, as it is supposed to carry part of a corpse on its nose.[1] Fowls form a regular article of diet, but some taboos in this connection are mentioned elsewhere.

Eggs are eaten only by children and old people; that is, by those outside the child propagating age. Milk is never consumed in any form. They say, "What a disgusting habit, to suck the juice of an animal while it is still alive!"

Pregnant women will not eat certain things lest the child be born with some deformity, such as the snout of a pig, or the white stripes of a zebra.

Art and decoration. Sculpture can hardly be said to be an art known to the Yao. The only piece of stone work I have ever seen was a granite boulder, on the surface of which cup-holes had been made for the game of *Bao* (Pl. IV, fig. 4).

Of late years, individuals here and there have begun carving wooden figures of men and animals. The Yao, of course, make no idols. It is uncertain exactly how long it is since any of these people started producing wooden figures. I should think that this art has sprung up within the past twelve or thirteen years, that is to say, since there has been a market for them among European residents. In the first place only natives and some of the commoner animals, the eland and leopard, were represented; since then, many animals and Europeans have been copied. The native is extraordinarily clever in reproducing characteristic features in dress, etc., so that a Portuguese is easily distinguished from an Englishman. The little models in ivory of animals and native household objects, made by the Swahili people on Lake Nyasa, have never been copied by the Yao. Neither do they make clay images of men and cattle as do the Zulu-descended Angoni and cattle-keeping Wankonde. No native would allow any wooden figure to remain in his house for fear of ill luck; the women especially would look askance at them, fearing some misfortune in their next pregnancy. Little wooden figures of birds, however, are sometimes seen affixed to the point of the hut roof.

The making of carved figures, then, is of recent introduction, or rather is a recent event in the evolution of the Yao, as they were not taught but self-inspired in the work.

The ability to make representations of objects by drawing appears in the same way to originate spontaneously here and there as a sport. Natives with a talent for drawing are found among all the tribes, and among the Yao, it is said, there have always been some who have been able to draw. Naturally enough, their reproductions are made on the walls of their houses, and their subjects are generally animals of the forest, sometimes men and houses, or some other object of particular interest.[2] (Pl. VIII, fig. 1). I also give sketches of some other drawings I have noted (Pl. XVIII); the line figure of a man at Makanjila's

[1] Vide supra, p. 297.

[2] Cf. A. Werner, 'A Native Painting from Nyasaland,' Journ. Afric. Soc., London 1910, vol. 9, no. 35, p. 280-283.

4: Stanmus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Ngoni FR5
Maravi FR4

Women wear their cloth folded across the upper level of the breasts from right to left. Men and women often have two cloths, one over the loins, only the second fastening over the chest.

A menstruating woman also wears a small piece of calico corresponding to a diaper supported by string round the waist.[1] The same thing is worn after childbirth for six months. Angoni women always wear them.

The Angoni, Chipeta wear their cloth toga-fashion, carrying a fold of cloth on the left arm. An Angoni chief wears three such, blue, white and coloured, the first outside, the last next to the skin.

The material used is now practically everywhere European-made calico, formerly bark cloth only was used by Nyanja, though weaving had been accomplished by Angoni, where skins were and are used as articles of clothing.

There is nothing to distinguish men of various grades, etc. Fashion at the present time is very capricious—some patterned cloth being much worn one month will have no sale a month later; this is true both of men and of women.

There is no class uniform, and no "costume" are worn save in dancing (q.v.).

Men are now seen wearing a piece of calico twisted up on the head in turban form, a custom lately introduced from the coast—the only indigenous head-gear is the string skull-cap worn by Angoni widows.

Under the heading of dress must be included the bead aprons worn by Yao and Angoni. Among the former the use of this garment is restricted to the women, who in the house sometimes wear nothing else; among the Angoni the children often have them and no other clothing.

Sandals are sometimes made of skin and fastened on the feet with a thong when crossing thorny country.

Among Angoni the *mondo* only used to be worn; this is a small hard-coated fruit which was hollowed out and worn just covering the glans penis.

Food, etc.

The staple food throughout the country is either maize or rice, the latter only at various spots on the lake shore where it can be grown. Two final meals per diem are taken, at 9 or 10 a.m. and again at 6 p.m.; each consists of *nsima* porridge made from maize flour or rice flour or boiled rice with some *ndiwo* (relish) to which the salt is added. At odd times the native will eat anything that opportunity offers—a piece of cassava root, a boiled sweet potato, a roasted maize cob, etc.

The *nsima* is made by stirring flour (*ufa*) into boiling water till a stiff paste is formed; this is kept cooking for five minutes and then scraped out with a wooden

[1] Diaper or *nshindo*: a woman keeps five or six; they are never put away in baskets but always hung up; a woman changes every time she bathes, using two or three per diem; they may be given to a female child to wear, but are then not worn again by a woman.

4: Stanmus D-S (ca. 1909)1910 FT7 T&o FT7 Maravi FR4

upon into a clean shallow basket or on to a plate. The *ndiwo* or relish, consisting of vegetables such as beans or a kind of spinach, a little fish or chicken, is cooked in a separate pot, and round these three about to eat collect. Washing their left hands in water, they take some of the porridge and making a sausage shape of it, dip it in the *ndiwo* and then cram it into their mouths.

Salt was obtained either from natural deposits or from "salt earth" on a stream bank near Fort Johnston, or from the ashes of burnt *banga* reeds or mankedzo; by a method of percolation through porous pots.

The native rather drinks between meals—water. After eating he may wash his mouth out and clean his teeth, using the frayed end of a piece of wood as a brush.

Alcohol.—With the exception of the people living on the lower river, who drink fermented palm *juice*,[1] beer is the common alcoholic beverage. Beer is made from maize (*chimanga*) or millet (*mapira*); the *crop* of the latter is very largely used *for* beer making; it makes the best beer and is certainly preferred by Angoni.

Gruel is prepared by boiling flour with water; after an hour leaven (*chimera*) is added fermentation sets in; and it may be drunk the next day; it is the sweet beer, *mtiko* or *ontendere*. On the second day it is again boiled and is allowed to cool; the third day more leaven is added (*chikotila*): the fourth day fresh gruel is made, and the contents of the original pot, now called *upanga*, is added to it, making two pots of beer. It may be drunk the same day while hot or allowed to cool and taken on the second day.

Food-stuffs.

1. Maize (*chimanga*), millet (*mapira, mawere*), rice (*mpunga*).
2. Cassava—sweet potato.
3. Beans and peas of many varieties.
4. Pumpkins, cucumbers, melons (*dzunga, mikoko, chikwenda*).
5. Many kinds of leaves growing wild—also pumpkin leaves, of which a kind of spinach is made.
6. Bananas (*pese-pese*), sugar cane and reeds are cooked.
7. White ants, locusts, honey.
8. Numbers of small animals are eaten by Chipeta, Angoni, etc. With the spread of Mohammedanism this is going out; rats, mice, hares, rock-rabbit, etc. Chipeta will eat dog, and I once saw one eat baboon. Frogs, shell-fish, snakes, crocodiles, crows, vultures, eagles, are never eaten.
9. Fish (*nsomba*), fresh or dried, is much eaten, thirteen varieties being enumerated.
10. Chickens, ducks, wild birds that they may snare.

[1] Spirits used to be made by distilling from bees-and bananas-and palm-juice by means of a pot and a gun barrel.

4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7
Morovi FR4

Ongo, the residue after pounding maize, is eaten by the women. No oils are used in cooking, but of fat and suet any native is very fond. Meat may be dried and smoked if in large quantity: flesh, fish and fowl is commonly roasted on spits; small pieces of chicken may be made into a kind of stew with beans and eaten as the relish. When on a journey the fire is commonly made against a tree. The cooking vessels are cleaned before use, not after. The fried fish eaten is often partly decomposed, and meat which is very high, even with maggots, is cooked and eaten, maggots and all.

Tabus.—Bushbuck is not eaten by many natives, as they say it feeds near graveyards. Fowls are not eaten by some, as this diet causes them to vomit; a snake-catcher never eats vegetables, and at the same time puts medicine on his hands. Many abstain from the flesh of certain animals as certain skin diseases are said to be caused thereby; all such diseases bear the name *mlowonga*.

A man who loses a relation by drowning takes an oath that he will never again eat fish, and never drink water from such lake, river, etc. Here the idea is of course simply to avoid eating part of the relation.

A Nyanja and Mashinga will not eat the flesh of the hippopotamus, because on the body they say there are the marks of a string round the loins and of a mat on his back, adding that long ago he was a man. Animals of prey would never under any circumstances be eaten. Milk used never to be drunk by an adult, as it was said to cause a man to become as a child. A man would not dare to drink woman's milk as it was said he would surely die of *dysentery*.

Tobacco, etc.—The smoking of tobacco was a custom introduced from the coast. Chewing was general among Mashinga and Yao men and women, while the Angoni and MaNanja snuffed. With the tobacco a little lime, made by burning *ghalla*, was taken in the mouth. Giddiness and sleepy sensations were experienced after chewing. The Nyasa and Awisa smoke a bubble-bubble, the water vessel being a large *nsumpu*-shaped gourd with a reed stem supporting a large bowl of soapstone wood, sometimes very nicely carved (Plate XXVII, Figs. 5 and 7). The Anyanja smokes a pipe with the bowl made of clay and the stem of bamboo (Plate XXVII, Fig. 6); these are made by the women. Tobacco is grown in nearly every village, a large-leaved rather coarse variety; it is sun-dried and rolled up into hollow rings 6 inches in diameter and 3 inches broad. For snuff (*Fodia scandens*) the sun-dried tobacco is further dried over a fire on a pan, when cold it is ground on a stone with a smaller stone by the women, and with it is mixed some ashes of the *nyasa* fig-tree.

At Blantyre I obtained a water-pipe made of bamboo stem; this was the water reservoir; a stem of reed supports a little clay bowl. The mouth is placed over the upper end of the bamboo. Hemp (*cannabis indica*) is smoked in a pipe of this kind.

AGRICULTURE.

The people live by cultivating the soil. Both sexes help in hoeing and planting, the collecting of the crops being mostly done by women. The hoe is the

10: Sanderson D-5 (ca. 1920)1922 FT7 Yao FT7

The man and boys now pass through the arch in order of seniority; each splashes himself with the water in the trough, but neither speaks nor rinses the mouth. The women come next, led by the head-wife of the chief; the latter rinses her mouth and, instructed by the doctor, repeats a prayer similar to that offered by her husband. The remainder of the women merely splash themselves, like the men, before passing through the arch. All then return to the village, where the *pyajila* is continued.

Finally the doctor takes the hammer-head from the trough and hands it to the chief, who refits the haft into it, and, a hoe having been placed on the ground, goes through the form of forging the latter by beating it with the hammer. He then scrapes the ground with the hoe as if clearing a place overgrown with grass; he does not dig with it as in hoeing up the ground for planting seed. After this rite the chief again bathes in medicated water similar to that in the trough, and the ceremony is complete.

Whereas the *pyajila* ceremony and its adjunct, the rite of the arch, are now but rarely performed, no Yao will omit the rite of purification after a death in his family. This ceremony consists of two essential parts, both protective against the *ndoke*, a disease characterized by dropsy and supposed to be contracted by contact with a corpse, or by association, especially by sharing a meal, with those who have been in such contact. The first of these parts is bathing in certain medicines, which protects the bather from *ndoke*, and the second consists of a sort of communion meal, shared by all friends and especially relatives with those who have been contaminated, and designed to protect those friends and relatives.

The decoction for bathing is made by soaking the roots of *Asparagaceæ* and *Amomeæ* in water, together with the bark of *mkumaru*, one piece each from the east and west aspects of the tree; the water assumes a reddish tint, and the whole body is bathed.

The communion meal consists of porridge made from any kind of flour or of rice, and some spends beans. In the latter some scorched and powdered root of *mtandanpiele* is mixed, with a little salt. All near relatives of the deceased must partake of this meal, as well as their wives and their near relatives; part is carefully put aside for the use of any relative unable to be present at the ceremony.

Latterly, since the spread of Islam among the WaYao, this rite has become confused with the distribution of food to the poor at the funeral of a Muslim, and the Arabic word *sadaqa* ("charity") is now generally used for it, to the exclusion of its wider, correct meaning.

It may be mentioned here that after the death of a child the father is denied access to his wife for a period of about three weeks, and the first act must be one of coitus interruptus.

MERRIMTH SANDERSON.

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